

Professional Connections & Continuous Career Development Helped Animal Science Major Secure Employment

Jose Curiel is a second year Animal Science major. Raised his entire life in Pixley, he didn't get many opportunities to leave the area, and never outside of California. Jose currently works as a part-time Training Assistant at Your Pro Dog Trainer, a local canine training facility.

Jose's inspiration to pursue an Animal Science degree comes solely from his passion for animal care. Growing up, he always had dogs of different breeds and learned to care for them at a young age. His grandparents raised livestock - cows, chickens, and goats – and he helped them often. Feeling as if he never got along with people, Jose found comfort in animals and wanted to gain knowledge of the agriculture world – making it his goal to become a part of it.

In Jose's two years at COS, he feels that he has definitely made small differences which he is proud of. He's built relationships with his student peers - offering his opinions when others are struggling to figure out what to do, helping others study, and even connecting students with the services provided at his work. Jose credits the AG faculty and COS Career Services in helping him secure a work experience opportunity as a complement to his academic training. The real-world experience has allowed him to apply the knowledge learned in class and labs. "Everything I've learned at COS, I use each day at my job," Curiel said.

While Jose is proud of his accomplishments, he does acknowledge that there are still some challenges ahead. "I really have a hard time socializing; I'm much better with animals rather than people, and that mentality has especially limited me in asking for help when I need it." Jose knows that whichever job he chooses to focus, there will always be a demand for interpersonal skills – he's made a more concerted effort recently to take advantage of honing his communication, leadership, and teamwork abilities by joining clubs on campus and even tutoring his peers.

Other than his love for animals, Jose is fascinated by the career diversity within Agriculture. He's considered career paths in botany, veterinary medicine, and crop production just to name a few. Jose knows that he will always have choices throughout his career development, but for now his focus is on canines – which has been a lifelong passion.





Jose's degree pursuit with the COS Ag Division has been very 'hands-on.' He has enjoyed his lab courses the most – administering vaccines, operating a cattle shoot, rounding-up sheep, hotwalking horses, identifying organisms under a microscope, studying animal behavior/body language, and even dissecting an animal. Jose understands the importance applied learning – a practice that he believes is the key to fully grasping a concept from a textbook or in a lecture.

As Jose's time at COS is nearing the end, he does have one important piece of advice for continuing students: Befriend staff, faculty, and other students. "Making professional connections and continued development has helped me successfully secure employment," Jose said. "I landed my job by making friends and spending time with them outside of the classroom. I sent a resume, participated in a mock interview with COS Career Services in Tulare, and then interviewed live with the employer. I was offered the job on-the-spot."

While Jose is happy with his current situation, he would encourage other students to take advantage of the opportunities recommended by faculty members through their connections, or from Career Services staff promoting job opportunities in and out of COS. "There is no reason for a student not to have a job

relating to their major – you just have to listen, be willing to work, and take a chance."